

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2082 PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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TAGS: PINT CA

SUBJECT: NEW BRUNSWICK SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

1. LT-GOV HEDARD ROBICHAUD GAVE THE TRADITIONAL SPEECH FROM THE THRONE IN FREDERICTON, NB, ON MAR 14, OPENING THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE 48TH NEW BRUNSWICK LEGISLATURE. ACCORDING TO REPORT IN MAR 15 HALIFAX CHRONICLE-HERALD, THERE WERE FEW NEW PROGRAMS, APART FROM SEVERAL PIECES OF PROPOSED "HOUSEKEEPING" LEGISLATION, WHICH WILL REQUIRE MAJOR EXPENDITURES OF MONEY. PERHAPS HINTING OF AN AUTUMN RATHER THAN A SPRING ELECTION, PREMIER HATFIELD CHARACTERIZED THE THRONE SPEECH AS "OBVIOUSLY NOT AN ELECTION SPEECH".

2. AS IN SO MANY THRONE SPEECHES ACROSS CANADA, THE GOVT GAVE ITSELF PLENTY OF OPERATING LEEWAY BY THE VERY VAGUENESS OF ITS COMMITMENTS. THERE ARE PROMISES TO "STRENGTHEN" THIS PROGRAM, TO "GIVE INCREASED ATTENTION" TO A SECOND PROGRAM, AND TO "ACCELERATE" A THIRD PROGRAM. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE A COUPLE OF PROPOSED PROGRAMS WHICH SEEMED ESPECIALLY NOTEWORTHY, ONE RELATING TO THE FISHERIES AND ONE TO THE FINANCING OF ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

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3. WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF FISHERMEN AND FISH PROCESSORS, THE PROVINCE IS ATTEMPTING TO DEVISE ITS OWN LONG-TERM PLAN FOR FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT. TO DO THIS, THE PROVINCIAL GOVT BELIEVES IT MUST BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MANAGE FISH RESOURCES JOINTLY WITH THE FEDERAL GOVT.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE FINANCING OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS, THE GOVT WILL INTRODUCE LEGISLATION REGULATING PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS AND PROVIDING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC TREASURY AND FOR FULL DISCLOSURE OF FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES.

5. COMMENT: THE FISHERIES PROGRAM MENTIONED ABOVE IN PARA THREE, WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON JOINT FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MANAGEMENT OF FISH STOCKS, ECHOES A SIMILAR PROGRAM PROPOSED IN NFLD. JUST HOW THESE PROVINCES CAN DEVISE THEIR OWN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND ASSIST IN THE MANAGEMENT OF FISH STOCKS WITHOUT INFRINGING EITHER UPON THE JEALOUSLY-GUARDED FEDERAL FISHERIES PERQUISITES OR THE RIGHTS OF NEIGHBORING PROVINCES REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

6. CRITICS OF HATFIELD'S GOVERNMENT HAVE MADE NUMEROUS ALLEGATIONS OF HANKY PANKY IN THE FINANCING OF THE PROVINCIAL PC PARTY. IF COMPREHENSIVE AND CONVINCING NEW LEGISLATION REFORMING THE FINANCING OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS IS DRAFTED AND ENACTED PRIOR TO THE NEXT ELECTION, THE EFFECT WILL CERTAINLY BE THAT OF STEALING A LOT OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY'S THUNDER. END COMMENT.

7. WHEN RECEIVED, COPIES OF THE THRONE SPEECH WILL BE POUCHED TO EUR/CAN AND EMBASSY OTTAWA.

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